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# Overall justice, work group identification and work outcomes: Test of moderated mediation process

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#### Abstract

This study examined an integrated model of the antecedents and outcomes of organisational and overall justice using a sample of Indian Call Centre employees (n = 458). Results of structural equation modelling (SEM) revealed that the four organisational justice dimensions relate to overall justice. Further, work group identification mediated the influence of overall justice on counterproductive work behaviors, such as presenteeism and social loafing, while conscientiousness was a significant moderator between work group identification and presenteeism and social loafing. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

## 1. Introduction

An organisation's sustainable competitive advantage is dependent on the proactive behaviors of its members (Kanter, 1983; Katz & Kahn, 1978). It is critical that we study employees' positive work attitudes and extra-role contributions, so we may better understand and explain the motivational basis of such actions and behaviors. The employment relationship may be characterized either as a social or economic exchange. (Blau, 1964, pp. 91–92) described social exchange as 'the voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others'. Social exchange, as an employment relationship, may be initiated by an organisation's fair treatment of its employees. This favor 'or spontaneous gesture of goodwill on the part of the organisation (or its agents) engenders an obligation on the part of employees to reciprocate the good deeds of the organisation'. Consequently, much research has examined the relationship between an organisation's fair treatment of its employees or organisational justice and work attitudes and behaviors (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Moon, Mayer, Kamdar, & Takeuchi, 2008; Moonman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994).

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Although this stream of research has contributed substantially to explicating the social exchange basis of employee attitudes and behaviors, it is not without limitations. First, in spite of the tripartite conceptualization of organisational justice, much of this research has not examined all three dimensions of justice simultaneously (Manogran, Stauffer, & Conlon, 1994). For example, Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000) examined procedural and interactional justice while Moorman et al. (1993) examined procedural justice. On the other hand Moon et al. (2008) examined procedural and distributive justice but did not take into account interactional or informational justice dimensions in their study. While Aryee et al. (2002) did look into the three dimensions of organisational justice, their study overlooked the importance of the informational justice dimension in predicting work outcomes.

Adopting a multi-foci perspective (the view that employees differentiate between the treatment they receive from various bodies in the workplace such as the organisation, co-workers and supervisors), organisational justice research has shown that these various justice dimensions relate to relevant work outcomes differently (Aryee et al., 2002; Walumbwa, Corpanzano, & Hartnell, 2009). There is a growing concern that the focus on specific dimensions of the construct does not reflect the depth and richness of the totality of individual's experience of organisational justice (Greenberg, 2001; Lind, 2001; Shapiro, 2001).

Finally, much of this stream of research has been conducted primarily in the individualist cultures of the West (particularly the U.S. and Europe) raising questions about the extent to which the findings are generalizable to the collectivist cultures of the East (see, e.g., Hofstede, 1980). According to Tripathi (1990), Indian society is characterized by meaningful ties among people and an importance on values such as respect for authority, affiliation,





dependency and social obligation. Similarly, Parikh and Garg (1990) observed that in India's collectivist culture, each individual has a distinctive role, and relatedness is defined by bonds of caste, community and neighbour. Therefore, "an examination of the emergence and functioning of social exchange processes in collectivist Eastern cultures where values differ dramatically from those typically found in a Western context, should enhance our understanding of the motivational underpinnings of employee work attitudes and behaviors in a competitive globalized economy" (Aryee et al., 2002, p. 268).

Some studies have addressed the problems faced by employees in the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) sector more specifically within call centres. For example, Rubery, Carroll, Cooke, Grugulis, and Earnshaw (2004) highlight employment issues and employment relations in the context of a UK based call centre. Witt, Andrews, and Carlson (2004) report the interaction between emotional exhaustion and conscientiousness and their effect on performance of customer service representatives (CSRs) in U.S. call centres. Similarly, Lewig and Dollard (2003) observe issues related to emotional dissonance, emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction in call centre workers. They found along similar lines, Grebner et al. (2003) have looked at working conditions, well-being and job related issues of agents in the call centre industry. Some studies have also looked into issues related to stress and satisfaction on employee performance and retention in the outsourcing firms, and their impact on empowerment and organisational commitment (e.g., Batt & Appelbaum, 1995; Grimshaw & Rubery, 1998; Knights & McCabe, 1998; Taylor, Mulvey, Hyman, & Bain 2002; Mulholland, 2004; Rose & Wright, 2005). However, none of these studies look at social exchange relationships to predict work attitudes and outcomes within the general call centres context or specifically within the Indian Call Centre context.

The present study contributes to the overall justice literature by pursuing two objectives. Following from the group engagement model and social identity theory prediction that individuals rely on their various justice experience to form overall justice perceptions, our first objective is to examine the perceptions of organisational justice as antecedents of overall justice (Tyler & Blader, 2003). Our second objective is to examine work group identification as a form of organisational attitude resulting from perceptions of overall justice and conscientiousness (personality trait) as complementary moderators of the influence of overall justice on counterproductive work behaviors such as presenteeism and social loafing. By examining the underlying mechanisms that affect the overall justice and work outcomes relationships, we seek to move research to fully understand the social exchange basis of employee work attitudes and behaviors by simultaneously examining all four dimensions (procedural, distributive, informational and interactional) of organisational justice to predict overall justice perception. Understanding mechanisms through which overall fairness perception impacts its underlying outcomes will provide practical knowledge for organisations to enhance employee experience of fairness at workplace and resulting beneficial outcomes for both individuals and organisations.

## 2. Theoretical framework and hypotheses development

Most research on justice identifies four distinct types of justice: procedural, distributive, informational and interactional (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). Indeed, empirical support exists for each of these conceptualisations, and has established the relationship between each type of justice and a broad range of individuals' attitudes and behaviors (see for, e.g., Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001; Konovsky, 2000). Several researchers have questioned the benefits of focusing exclusively on specific types of justice. They suggest a shift toward examining overall

justice judgments (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Lind, 2001; Shapiro, 2001). In this connection, Greenberg (2001) has argued that when individuals form impressions of justice, they are making a holistic judgment. Similarly, Lind (2001) noted that although individuals can distinguish between the sources of their justice experience when asked, what drives behaviors is an overall sense of fairness. Finally, Tornblom and Vermunt (1999) argued that individuals consider fairness as a whole than sum of its parts and that the components of fairness “are meaningful only in relation to the overall fairness of the situation” (p. 51). The common thread running through all of this research is that limited focus on distinct forms of justice may not provide either a complete or an accurate picture of how individuals make and use justice judgments.

Borrowing the lens from group engagement model and social identity theory, we posit that individual’s behavioral effort on behalf of a collective to which he or she belongs (which we will broadly refer to as their work group) is influenced by the role the group plays in how the individual thinks and feels about themselves (i.e., by the social identity they form around the group; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity is affected by the processes and treatment that people encounter in their work groups (i.e., their experience with how the group functions), which in turn impacts their experience as group members. Research has shown that fairness is a primary dimension that people use to evaluate the processes and treatment they encounter in their groups (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2000). We also posit that work group identification will relate to counterproductive work behaviors such as presenteeism and social loafing, moderated by conscientiousness. From a social exchange perspective, this means that the lack of fair treatment employees receive from their organisations will lead them to engage in counterproductive work behaviors such as presenteeism and social loafing.

## 2.1. Organisational justice and overall justice

Overall justice perceptions represent global evaluations of the fairness of an entity based on personal experiences as well as on the experiences of others (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). Increasingly, scholars have suggested that specific justice dimensions combine to shape overall justice perceptions (e.g., Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Lind, 2001; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Lipponen, Olkkonen, & Moilanen, 2004; Tornblom & Vermunt, 1999). However, these relationships have been examined in only a few studies and the results have been mixed. Kim and Leung (2007) found that distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justices were the strongest predictors of overall justice, respectively (but effects varied across cultures). In their Study 1, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) found that procedural, distributive, and interactional justice were the strongest predictors of overall justice, respectively. However, in a second study, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) found that only procedural and interactional justice explained significant variance in overall justice perceptions. Similarly, Jones and Martens (2007) found that interpersonal, informational, and distributive justice were the strongest predictors of overall justice, respectively, though procedural justice did not explain unique variance in overall justice perceptions. As such, we predict:

Hypothesis 1. All four dimensions of organisational justice, i.e., procedural, distributive, informational and interactional, will positively relate to overall justice.

## 2.2. Justice and work group identification

Researchers have argued that organisational justice is a significant predictor of organisational identification because perception of justice shapes the thoughts, feelings, and actions



of individuals and provides them with ways of evaluating social situations (Pratt, 1998; Tyler & Smith, 1997; Tyler, 1999). For example, procedural justice and distributive justice have been found to be positively related to organisational identification (Olkkonen & Lipponen, 2006), and procedural justice is reported to be positively related to post-merger organisational identification.

One of the key theoretical bases for understanding organisational identification is social identity theory, 'people use groups as sources of information about themselves' (Tyler, Degoey, & Smith, 1996, p. 914) and individuals may use their status or social standing in their organisations to enhance their self-worth (Tyler, 1999). Past studies have applied the social identity theory to explain the effects of organisational identification on job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and organisational citizenship behavior (Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, & Christ, 2004; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006).

Relatedly, Tyler and Blader (2003) have proposed the group engagement model which explains co-operation in groups in terms of group identification, and draws together the insights of the group-value model of procedural justice (Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990) and the relational model of authority (Tyler & Caine, 1981) and extends them to understand the antecedents of cooperation in groups (Tyler & Blader, 2000). The group engagement model sheds light on our understanding of what people are seeking when they involve themselves in groups and the importance of justice in social settings. As one might expect, people have considerable discretion about the degree to which they invest themselves in their groups by working on behalf of the group. To examine this issue, the group engagement model distinguishes between two classes of co-operative behavior: mandatory behavior and discretionary behavior. Mandatory behavior is stipulated by the group whereas discretionary behavior originates within the group member (Tyler & Blader, 2003). The model also argues that each of these forms of behaviors is differently motivated. Mandatory behaviors are more strongly affected by incentives and sanctions whereas discretionary behaviors are more strongly under the influence of people's internal motivations, e.g., their attitudes, values, etc. (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

The group engagement model further distinguishes between three aspects of group-linked or social identity: identification, pride and respect. Identification reflects that degree to which people cognitively merge their sense of self and their evaluations of self-worth with their judgments of the characteristics and status of their groups. Pride reflects the person's evaluation of the status of their group. Respect reflects their evaluation of their status within the group. The group engagement model argues that each of these aspects of identity play an important role in people's relationship to their group. Thus, the group engagement model hypothesises that when people identify more strongly with a group, they will be more willing to act co-operatively in that group-investing their time and energy in working to see the group succeed (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

Research has suggested the premise of group engagement model by showing that identification; pride and respect are connected to feelings of self-esteem and self-worth. This is consistent with the argument of the group engagement model that people use group identity based judgments to evaluate themselves (Tyler & Blader, 2003). Thus, all the three identity elements of the group engagement model are predicted to be related to engagement in the groups. The overall group engagement model makes clear why people focus so heavily on whether or not their groups' procedures are fair. The procedural fairness judgment provides key information that shapes the degree to which people regard their group as having high status, regard themselves as having high status in their group and identify with the group by merging their sense of self with the group. Procedural justice judgments are thus a key antecedent of identity assessments (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

It should be noted that some researchers have suggested that distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice and interactional justice are distinct constructs (Colquitt et al., 2001). Not surprisingly, previous studies on organisational justice have focused largely on distributive and procedural justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Loi, Ngo, & Foley, 2006). Nevertheless, researchers have turned their attention away from a focus on the fairness of reward allocations to interpersonal treatment on work procedures (for example, Colquitt, 2001; Roch & Shanock, 2006) because an individual's feelings about organisational fairness may not be fully explained by distributive or procedural justice. Therefore, distributive and procedural justice is increasingly replaced by informational justice and interactional justice in the investigation of the social exchange relationship between employees and organisations. The inclusion of informational and interpersonal justice adds significant values to research of organisational behavior because the provision of reasonable explanation – that is, informational justice – gives clues to employees about the activities of an organisation and the opportunities for their personal growth (Rousseau, 1998), while the fairness of interactional justice is about employees' status within their organisation (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Eblen, 1987; Holtz & Harold, 2009; Leifer & Maslach, 1988).

Consistent with this line of reasoning, recent research has indicated that overall justice predicts employees' overall job satisfaction better than specific justice dimensions (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Jones & Martens, 2007). Additionally, focusing on overall justice can provide a more complete picture of how justice influences other organisational phenomena (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Colquitt, Greenberg, & Scott, 2005). As such, we predict:

Hypothesis 2. Overall justice will positively relate to work group identification.

### 2.3. Presenteeism and social loafing

An organisation's long-term viability is critically dependent on the positive behaviors of its members (Kanter, 1983; Katz & Kahn, 1978). It is not surprising that recent years have seen an explosion of interest among organisational researchers in counterproductive work behaviors (CWB), which consists of intentional acts by employees that harm organisations or their stakeholders. This study, therefore, looks at two such CWB behaviors; presenteeism and social loafing. Though there is a wealth of literature available on social loafing, there is a paucity of research on presenteeism. Most of the literature on presenteeism is within the medical field, where presenteeism is defined mainly as a work culture which results in loss of productivity as employees go to work sick or tired (Hemp, 2004; Zengerle, 2004; Ceridian, 2006; Goetzel et al., 2004). Presenteeism is regarded generally as the opposite of absenteeism, i.e., simply the practice of coming to work when an individual should not, which results in being physically present but functionally absent.

Aronsson, Gustafsson, & Dallner (2000) identified a number of possible factors that might be responsible for presenteeism in a study which involved different occupational categories. Jobs that provide services to people were more prone to sickness presenteeism than other occupations, because of a felt responsibility toward clients. People working in occupations where clients depend on them and where there is no one to replace them may be more likely to come to work sick rather than to stay away (Aronsson et al., 2000). Further, employees might be more likely to spend more time at work while ill, due to increases in job insecurity and in workplace demands (Lewis & Cooper, 1999). Increasingly, employees may feel afraid to stay away from work (Lewis & Cooper, 1996; Simpson, 1998), feeling the need to put in long hours (Worrall & Cooper, 2002) due to insecurities related to

job loss. As we note above, much of the research on presenteeism appears in the medical literature (Aronsson et al., 2000; Berger, Howell, Nicholson & Sharda, 2003; Goetzel et al., 2004; Koopman et al., 2002; Stewart, Ricci, Chee, Morganstein, & Lipton, 2003; Wang et al., 2003). However, the root causes of presenteeism are not always medical. Loss of productivity or lower productivity issues may also arise due to other problems, e.g., financial trouble, work-life imbalance, etc., negative perception of work environment, including conflict with supervisor or colleague or the perception of unfairness in the workplace.

Another crucial concept related to CWB is 'social loafing', i.e., "the tendency of individuals to reduce effort when they are working in groups" (Latane, Williams & Harkins, 1979). The main explanation of social loafing is the tendency for an individual's effort to decrease when people work in groups rather than individually. Loafing has been shown to occur for a wide variety of tasks (Latane et al., 1979; Earley, 1989). In addition to group performance, social loafing has been associated with a number of negative outcomes. For example, Duffy and Shaw (2000) showed that social loafing was negatively related to group cohesiveness and potency which in turn, were related to performance, absenteeism, and group satisfaction. Kidwell and Bennett (1993) identified rational choice, normative conformity, and affective bonding as alternative motives for engaging in social loafing. Researchers such as Gagne and Zuckerman (1999) found that identifiability of individual contributions; task visibility (George, 1992); potential for evaluation of individual contributions (Karau & Williams, 1994); and incentives for high performance (George, 1995; Miles & Greenberg, 1993) were all negatively related to social loafing. In this connection, it should be pointed out that loafing occurs, or is strengthened, in the absence of an individual evaluation structure imposed by the environment (Price & Harrison, 2006). This occurs because working in the group environment results in less self-awareness (Mullen, 1983). Several studies have shown that the ability for an individual to participate in social loafing increases as the group size increases. If groups remain small, the individual will not have the opportunity to become invisible and their lack of input will be readily evident. The lack of identifiability in a group is a psychological production that has been documented in several studies (Carron, Burke, & Prapavessis, 2004). Thus, a social loafer is not productive and, as such, this also reflects a kind of presenteeism as the employee is on the job but not fully productive. Therefore, it is imperative to study the causes of both social loafing and presenteeism, as these are counterproductive work behaviors which have possible detrimental effects on the overall functioning of any organisation.

Studies of organisational justice have previously demonstrated that perceived fairness of rewards, organisational procedures, and interpersonal treatment are related to individual attitudes and behaviors (Aryee et al., 2002; Holtz & Harold, 2009; Moon et al., 2008). Furthermore, the extent to which individuals perceive justice in the organisation was related to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, performance and organisational citizenship behavior (Aryee et al., 2002; Colquitt et al., 2001; Erdogan & Liden, 2006). Previous studies have also indicated that individuals who identify with their organisations to some extent may have a higher level of job satisfaction (Van Knippenberg & Van Schie, 2000; Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2001), in-role and extra-role performance (Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler and Blader, 2001), effective inter-group relations (Richter, West, Van Dick, & Dawson, 2006) and lower level of turnover intentions (Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998). Further, Greenberg (1990) and Skarlicki, Folger and colleagues (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999) have all taken an organisational justice perspective, viewing CWB as a cognition-based response to experienced injustice at workplace.

Indeed, recent research has shown that the relationship between justice perceptions and individual behaviors is mediated by social exchange relationships (Masterson et al., 2000; Murphy, Wayne, Liden, & Erdogan, 2003). As such, we predict:

Hypothesis 3a. Work group identification will mediate the influence of overall justice on presenteeism.

Hypothesis 3b. Work group identification will mediate the influence of overall justice on social loafing.

#### 2.4. Personality and work outcomes

The resurgence of interest in personality at work began in the early 1980s. Since then, a wide range of individual studies have been conducted to reveal links between personality, work attitudes and work performance (e.g., Moon et al., 2008; Robertson & Callinan, 1998; Nikolau & Robertson, 2001). Over the past decade, the conceptualization of personality as comprising five broad factors (i.e., the five factor model (FFM), comprising neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) has dominated the literature, studying how an individual's personality might be related to organisational outcomes. Meta-analyses (Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kemp, & McCloy, 1990) have demonstrated consistent relationships between the broad factors of personality and a wide range of organisational outcomes. The effectiveness of the big five taxonomy of personality, especially the construct of conscientiousness, in predicting individual performance has been consistently demonstrated (Barrick & Mount, 1991). The personality trait of conscientiousness is characterized by planning, thoroughness, hard work, and purposeful striving toward goals (Digman, 1990). In a study exploring the relationship between personality, job satisfaction and OCB (organisation citizenship behavior) Organ and Lingl (1995) results showed that it was only conscientiousness that showed a reliable connection in predicting OCB. In a meta-analysis published the same year Organ and Ryan (1995) reported that the big five personality trait of conscientiousness was specifically related to one aspect of OCB, impersonal or generalized compliance. As well as being a predictor of generalized compliance, conscientiousness also accounted for unique variance in three dimensions of OCB—compliance, altruism, and civic virtue (Konovsky and Organ, 1996).

Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, and Mount (1998) reported that work teams with higher mean levels of conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, and emotional stability had higher supervisor ratings of team performance. The construct of conscientiousness includes feelings of competence, achievement striving, self-discipline, and dutifulness (Costa, McCrae, & Dye, 1991). Teams made up of members who are conscientious are more deliberate, organised, and task focused, which should be related to effective team performance. In this connection, research has shown a relationship between achievement motivation (a component of conscientiousness) and group performance (Schneider & Delaney, 1972). Similarly, conscientiousness has been shown to have a positive relationship to job performance. Indeed, it is shown to predict job performance better than cognitive ability tests on overall performance, including low complexity jobs in which cognitive ability tests have been shown to be poor predictors of performance (Avis, Kudisch, & Fortunato, 2002). Conscientiousness is proposed as a moderator between work group identification, presenteeism and social loafing. As such, we predict:

Hypothesis 4a. Conscientiousness will influence the interaction between work group identification on presenteeism.

Hypothesis 4b. Conscientiousness will influence the interaction between work group identification on social loafing.

### 3. Method

Respondents were employees and their team leaders, drawn from 5 major call centre firms located at Mindspace, in Mumbai (India). The employees were all from the billing department, handling billing related queries, working at the same level of the organisational hierarchy. All participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and confidential. Additionally, all employees were provided self-addressed stamped envelopes in which to return their responses in confidential manner. The survey was administered during company working hours.

The average age of participants was 24.61 (s.d. = 6.20) and 52% were males. They had a mean of 15.42 years of education (s.d. = 3.84) and a mean organisational tenure of 1.57 years (s.d. = 3.07), with a mean team leader-subordinate tenure of 1.05 years (s.d. = 3.63). The average age of team leaders was 32.12 (s.d. = 5.61) and 60% were males. They had a mean of 16.05 years of education (s.d. = 2.33) and a mean organisational tenure of 4.18 (s.d. = 4.55).

Out of the 800 questionnaires distributed, 473 completed and usable questionnaires were returned and 458 were usable. We were unable to match responses of the other 15 subordinates and those of their team leaders. On average, a team leader rated at least 3 subordinates (ranging from 3 to maximum 5).

#### 3.1. Measures

**Organisational justice:** This scale was adapted from Colquitt's (2001) 20 item measure that asked participants to give their responses on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = to a small extent and 5 = very large extent. Next, the Thibaut and Walker (1975) items were used to measure procedural justice. To measure distributive justice, we used the items from the Leventhal (1976) scale. Finally, Bies and Moag's (1986) items were used to measure both interpersonal justice and informational justice.

**Overall organisational justice:** Employee perceptions of justice were assessed with the six-item scale developed and validated by Ambrose and Schminke (2009), while overall supervisory justice perceptions were assessed with the same six item scale, altered slightly to change the focus of the fairness to be one's supervisor rather than one's organisation.

**Work group identification:** This scale was adapted from Mael & Ashforth's (1992) 6-item measure that asked participants to give their ratings on a 5 point Likert scale where 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree.

**Conscientiousness:** This measure was obtained from the Oregon Research Institute sponsored website called International Personality Item Pool (2001). The questions in the survey were randomly organised since they were positively and negatively keyed; meaning that some questions were targeted at measuring high



levels of conscientiousness and others to low levels of conscientiousness. The scoring of the same consisted of reverse scoring the negatively keyed questions and then averaging all the scores to find a single number measure.

**Presenteeism:** This scale was adapted from 6-item Stanford Presenteeism Scale (2001) version, drawn from [Koopman et al. \(2002\)](#). The self-report items were tailored in order for team leaders to rate the subordinates. The 'I' was replaced with 'their/ them'. Team leaders were asked to describe their subordinates work behaviors during the month prior to the survey administration. For each of the statements they were asked to check any one out of the 5 responses (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) which showed agreement or disagreement with the statement.

**Social loafing:** This scale was adapted from [George's \(1992\)](#) 10-item measure that asked team leaders to give their responses on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 = not at all characteristic to 5 = very characteristic.

### 3.2. Data analysis

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test the measurement model. AMOS (version 5.0) and HLM were used in order to test the hypotheses and establish good model fit [Fornell and Larcker \(1981\)](#). It should be noted that the [Baron and Kenny \(1986\)](#) mediation analysis was not found suitable due to the complexity of the model (i.e., moderated mediation) under consideration and limitations with the method. In this connection, [James and Brett \(1984\)](#) coined the term moderated mediation, suggesting it for mediation models involving relations that "require the addition of a moderator for either the  $\hat{m} = f(x)$  or  $\hat{y} = f(m)$  relations, or both" (p. 314). Moderated mediation models attempt to explain both how and when a given effect occurs ([Frone, 1999](#)). Moderated mediation occurs when the strength of an indirect effect depends on the level of some variable. That is, when mediation relations are contingent on the level of a moderator [Edwards and Lambert \(2007\)](#). There are multiple ways in which the magnitude of an indirect effect may be dependent upon a moderator. We use [Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes \(2007\)](#) specific suggestions to measure moderated mediation effects, which are referred to as models 1–5. Using the syntax for the macro described by [Preacher et al. \(2007\)](#), analyses corresponding to model 3 described were conducted in SPSS. The SEM approach further allowed us to test all relationships at once to account for any potential measurement error as opposed to testing the model in a piecemeal fashion. Also, because individuals are nested within groups, we deemed it important to analyze our data using random coefficient modelling (commonly referred to as hierarchical linear modelling HLM).

### 4. Results

We conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses to examine whether the dimensions of organisational justice: procedural, distributive, informational, interactional, overall justice, work group identification and conscientiousness, all of

Table 1  
 Comparisons of measurement models.

| Models and structure                                | $\chi^2$ | df  | $D\chi^2$ | TLI  | CFI  | RMR  | RMSEA |
|---|----------|-----|-----------|------|------|------|-------|
| 7 factors (PJ, DJ, IJ, InJ, OJ, WGI, Con)           | 266.34   | 87  |           | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.02 | 0.03  |
| 6 factors (IJ and InJ merged, PJ, DJ, OJ, WGI, Con) | 551.66   | 91  | 213.89    | 0.85 | 0.89 | 0.04 | 0.08  |
| 5 factors (PJ, DJ and OJ merged, IJ, InJ, WGI, Con) | 355.8    | 94  | 117.76    | 0.91 | 0.93 | 0.03 | 0.08  |
| 4 factors (PJ, DJ, IJ and InJ merged, OJ, WGI, Con) | 606.09   | 98  | 322.52    | 0.82 | 0.88 | 0.04 | 0.08  |
| 1 factor (PJ, DJ, IJ, InJ, OJ, WGI, Con all merged) | 1246.34  | 105 | 1601.69   | 0.67 | 0.69 | 0.08 | 0.21  |

Note: n = 458. PJ = procedural justice, DJ = distributive justice, IJ = informational justice, InJ = interactional justice, OJ = overall justice, WGI = work group identification, and Con = conscientiousness.

\*\*Significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

Table 2  
Means, standard deviations and correlations among study variables.

| Variables | M    | SD   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7      | 8      | 9      |
|-----------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| PJ        | 4.64 | 1.24 | (0.92) |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| DJ        | 4.14 | 1.46 | 0.38** | (0.90) |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| IJ        | 4.01 | 1.19 | 0.59** | 0.53** | (0.89) |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| InJ       | 4.44 | 1.14 | 0.51** | 0.40** | 0.45** | (0.89) |        |        |        |        |        |
| OJ        | 3.56 | 1.58 | 0.43** | 0.34** | 0.48** | 0.53** | (0.80) |        |        |        |        |
| WGI       | 3.76 | 1.26 | 0.53** | 0.55** | 0.34** | 0.39** | 0.41** | (0.84) |        |        |        |
| C         | 3.91 | 0.86 | 0.21*  | 0.30** | 0.37** | 0.28*  | 0.37** | 0.21** | (0.81) |        |        |
| P         | 3.62 | 0.95 | 0.48** | 0.44** | 0.51** | 0.42** | 0.38** | 0.56** | 0.37** | (0.86) |        |
| SL        | 4.48 | 0.79 | 0.26   | 0.34   | 0.21   | 0.30   | 0.31   | 0.49   | 0.32   | 0.08   | (0.93) |

Note: PJ = procedural justice, DJ = distributive justice, InJ = interactional justice, IJ = informational justice, WGI = work group identification, C = conscientiousness, P = presenteeism, SL = social loafing.

Figures in parentheses are alpha reliabilities.

\* p < 0.05.

\*\* p < 0.01.

which were collected from the same source (employees from same department) captured distinct constructs. Table 1 shows results of comparison models. As shown in Table 1, CFA results showed that relative to the hypothesised seven-factor model ( $\chi^2 = 266.34$ ;  $df = 87$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ;  $TLI = 0.97$ ;  $CFI = 0.96$ ;  $RMR = 0.02$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.03$ ), all the other alternative models where the indicators of two constructs were set to load on a single construct fit the data significantly worse. Factor loadings for all the seven factors also showed high significant standardized loadings  $>0.65$ , providing support for convergent validity. We also compared our hypothesised model to a load on to a single construct (Table 1, model 5). Relative to the hypothesised seven-factor model, this alternative model fit the data significantly worse ( $\chi^2 = 1246.34$ ;  $df = 105$ ;  $D\chi^2[5] = 1601.69$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ;  $TLI = 0.67$ ;  $CFI = 0.69$ ;  $RMR = 0.08$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.21$ ). These results further support the discriminant validity of procedural, distributive, informational, interactional justice; overall justice and work group identification.

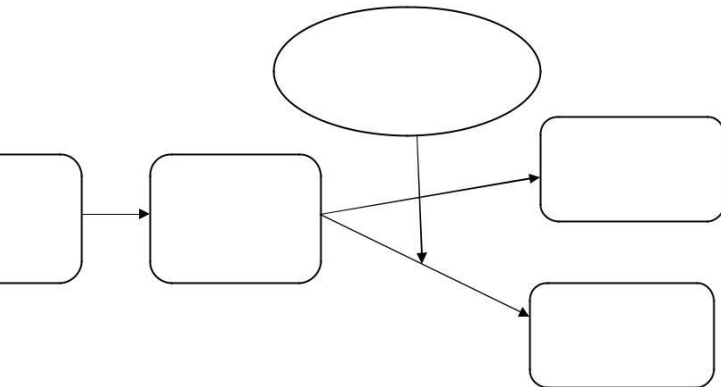
Next we examined a measurement model that included all of the study variables (e.g., procedural, distributive, informational and interactional justice; overall justice, work group identification, conscientiousness, presenteeism and social loafing) to assess the relationships between latent variables and their indicators. For both presenteeism and social loafing, we randomly created three parcels of items. Results showed that the nine-factor measurement model fit the data well ( $\chi^2 = 566.34$ ;  $df = 177$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ;  $TLI = 0.93$ ;  $CFI = 0.99$ ;  $RMR = 0.02$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.04$ ). The descriptive statistics, internal consistency reliabilities and intercorrelations of all study variables are presented in Table 2.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that all four dimensions of organisational justice, i.e., procedural, distributive, informational and interactional will positively relate to overall justice. In Hypothesis 2, we posited that overall justice will positively relate to work

group identification. We used the same parcel of items of the model above. The HLM results testing these hypotheses are shown in Fig. 2 ( $\chi^2 = 589.74$ ;  $df = 165$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $TLI = 0.93$ ;  $CFI = 0.93$ ;  $SRMR = 0.05$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.06$ ). We allowed the disturbance terms of work group identification and conscientiousness as well as disturbance terms of presenteeism and social loafing co-varying in order to provide a non-causal association between these variables. As shown in Fig. 1, procedural justice ( $b = 0.22$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), distributive justice ( $b = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), informational justice ( $b = 0.32$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and interactional justice ( $b = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), respectively, are all related to overall justice positively, thereby supporting Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 was also supported. The HLM results showed that overall justice positively related to work group identification ( $b = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Hypotheses 3a and 3b suggested that work group identification will mediate the influence of overall justice on presenteeism and social loafing respectively, whereas Hypotheses 4a and 4b predicted that conscientiousness will influence the interaction of work group identification on presenteeism and social loafing respectively. In the first alternative model, we dropped the direct path from work group identification to presenteeism because this path was not significant as shown in Fig. 2 ( $b = 0.17$ ,  $p = n.s.$ ). This first alternative model exhibited fit statistics almost identical to

that of Fig. 2 ( $\chi^2 = 549.34$ ;  $df = 175$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $TLI = 0.93$ ;  $CFI = 0.93$ ;  $SRMR = 0.05$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.06$ ) with the difference in chi-square being non-significant ( $\Delta\chi^2[1] = 4.02$ ,  $n.s.$ ). The second model was similar to Fig. 2 except we added two direct paths from overall justice to both presenteeism and social loafing. This second model also exhibited fit statistics similar to Fig. 2 ( $\chi^2 = 529.23$ ;  $df = 172$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $TLI = 0.93$ ;  $CFI = 0.93$ ;  $SRMR = 0.05$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.06$ ), with difference in chi-square non-significant ( $\Delta\chi^2[3] = 0.81$ ,  $n.s.$ ). Further, the direct paths from overall justice



Conscientiousness

Organisational Justice:

Procedural Justice  
Distributive Justice  
Informational Justice  
Interactional Justice

Overall  
Justice

Work  
Group  
Identification

Presenteeism

Social Loafing

Fig. 1. Hypothesised model.

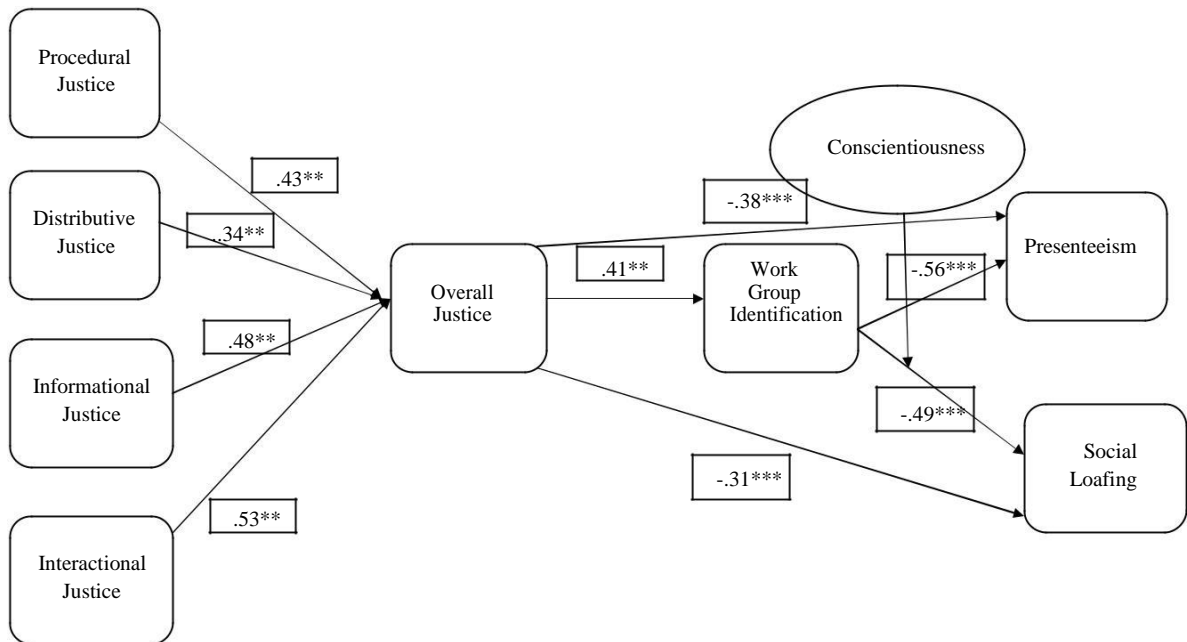


Fig. 2. Alternative model.



to both presenteeism and social loafing and from work group identification to social loafing were not significant. Therefore, [Hypothesis 3b](#) was not supported.

As a final check, we used the [Preacher et al. \(2007\)](#) macro to only run the moderated mediation model without organisational justice. The first part of the output is the OLS regression models for the mediator and dependent variable. These are estimated independently, unlike in an SEM context in which the coefficients would be estimated simultaneously. These are estimated independently, unlike in an SEM context in which the coefficients would be estimated simultaneously [Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt \(2005\)](#). For the present model, the mediator model is a simple regression predicting the mediator variable (WGI) from the independent variable (OJ), whereas the dependent variable model is a multiple regression predicting the dependent variables (presenteeism/SL) from the mediator, the moderator (CON), the independent variable, and the interaction between the moderator and the mediator. As can be seen, the independent variable significantly predicts the mediator (coefficient = 0.211,  $p < 0.001$ ) in case of presenteeism and (coefficient = 0.233,  $p < 0.001$ ) in case of social loafing. These analyses support our [Hypothesis 2](#), i.e., overall justice is positively related to work group identification.

The effect of the mediator on the dependent variable depends on the moderator (interaction coefficient = 0.142,  $p = 0.019$ ). In case of presenteeism and (interaction coefficient = 0.122,  $p = 0.014$ ) in case of social loafing, our analyses supports [Hypotheses 3a and 3b](#). Work group identification mediates the relationship between organisational justice with that of presenteeism/social loafing ([Table 3](#)).

The last section of the output provides conditional indirect effects at increments of the moderator, as well as SEs and p-values, ranging from the lowest observed value of the moderator to the highest observed value. When they exist, the macro also inserts the upper and/or lower bounds of values of the moderator variable for which the indirect effect is statistically significant using the [Johnson-Neyman technique \(1936\)](#). When the indirect effect for conscientiousness = 0.086, the p-value for the indirect effect is 0.05 for presenteeism and when the indirect effect for conscientiousness = 0.091, the p-value for the indirect effect is 0.05 for social loafing. Because there is no larger value of conscientiousness

in the output for which the p-value for the conditional indirect effect is larger than 0.05 within the range of the data, we conclude that the effect of organisational justice on presenteeism/social loafing through work group identification is statistically significant when conscientiousness is at least 1.99 for presenteeism and 1.74 for social loafing. Thus the results demonstrated that conditional indirect effects for work group identification were significant in the high conscientiousness condition (pre-presenteeism = 0.086,  $p = 0.05$ ; social loafing = 0.091,  $p = 0.05$ ) but were not significant under low conscientiousness (pre-presenteeism = 0.019, n.s.; social loafing = 0.015, n.s.). Hypotheses 4a and 4b were therefore supported, i.e., the indirect effect of organisational justice on presenteeism and social loafing via mediator work group identification differs across levels of high and low conscientiousness. Table 4 presents moderated mediation

Table 3  
Regression results for testing moderated mediation.

| Predictors  | Presenteeism | Social loafing |        |        |        |
|---|--------------|----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Mediator variable model (predicting WGI)                              |              |                |        |        |        |
| OJ  | 0.211***     | 0.233***       |        |        |        |
| Dependent variable model (predicting DV)                              |              |                |        |        |        |
| OJ  | 0.021        | 0.585          |        |        |        |
| WGI   | 0.131        | 0.332          |        |        |        |
| CON   | 0.55**       | 0.44**         |        |        |        |
| WGI CON (interaction term)  | 0.142        | 0.122          |        |        |        |
|   | CON          | Ind Eff        | SE     | z      | p >  z |
| Conditional indirect effects at specific value(s) of the moderator(s) |              |                |        |        |        |
| Presenteeism  | 3.6044       | 0.1355         | 0.0320 | 4.2223 | 0.0000 |
|   | 4.9245       | 0.1745         | 0.0310 | 5.6298 | 0.0000 |
|   | 6.2446       | 0.2129         | 0.0392 | 5.4602 | 0.0000 |
| Social loafing  | 1.6745       | 0.2334         | 0.012  | 4.3213 | 0.0000 |
|   | 0.0103       | 0.7799         | 0.023  | 5.5198 | 0.0000 |
|   | 1.6951       | 0.6324         | 0.0272 | 5.4101 | 0.0000 |

Note: OJ = organisational justice; WGI = work group identification, CON = conscientiousness, P = presenteeism, SL = social loafing and DV = dependent variable. Moderator values listed are the sample mean and 1 SD.

\* $p < 0.05$ . \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Table 4

Moderated mediation results for presenteeism and social loafing across levels of conscientiousness (Hypotheses 4a and 4b).

| Moderator         | Level | Presenteeism        |       |      |      | Social loafing      |       |      |      |
|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|------|------|---------------------|-------|------|------|
|                   |       | Conditional Ind Eff | SE    | z    | p    | Conditional Ind Eff | SE    | z    | p    |
| Conscientiousness | High  | 0.086               | 0.028 | 2.61 | 0.01 | 0.091               | 0.035 | 2.78 | 0.01 |
|                   | Low   | 0.019               | 0.013 | 1.47 | 0.14 | 0.015               | 0.015 | 1.28 | 0.20 |

results for presenteeism and social loafing across level of conscientiousness.

## 5. Discussion

Drawing on social identity theory and the group engagement model, this study proposed and examined an integrated theory of antecedents of overall justice and the mediating influence of work group identification on two CWBs—presenteeism and social loafing. Our findings revealed that organisational justice is a positive predictor of overall justice perceptions. Perhaps because the dimensions of distributive, procedural and interactional justice have been noted to contribute to the development of the overall justice perceptions (Lind, 2001), previous research on antecedents of overall justice only focused on these 3 dimensions. Two aspects of the results warrant additional attention. First, it is useful to examine further the relationship between the specific justice judgments and overall justice. In this study, all four justice facets were significant predictors of overall justice judgments. Secondly, as an exchange relationship, employees are concerned about the probability of receiving valued outcomes in exchange of their investment in this relationship. Consequently identity factors such as work group identification have a potential to undermine an employee's experience of fairness which provides the informational input into forming an overall fairness judgment. This study makes an important contribution to research on the group engagement model and to our understanding of the motivational implications of social identity in organisational contexts. It does so by showing that social identity has strong associations with work group identification, and by demonstrating that social identity explains the impact of two key facets of the experiences people have with their work organisations (i.e., the organisational justice they experience and the overall justice perception they receive as a result of group membership). These findings are consistent with the group engagement model's emphasis on social identity as the primary basis of people's engagement in their groups and on the importance of locating social identity within the landscape of other factors that shape engagement.

Going beyond mere demonstration that social identity matters, the results reveal that group identity is especially critical for understanding counterproductive work behaviors, insofar as it explains the impact of two organisational conditions that have received a great deal of attention for their relation to counterproductive work behaviors: perceptions of the overall justice experienced at work and evaluations of the group identification received as a result of group membership. Determining that social identity provides the mechanism by which these organisational conditions relate to employee behavior provides critical insight into understanding how, when, and why efforts to shape the context of employee work experiences may affect employee behavior. It also contributes to the growing acknowledgment within psychology that the collective self – the aspect of the self most closely linked to social identity – plays a fundamental role in shaping behavior (Hogg, 2001).

## 6. Managerial relevance

These findings suggest that the basis of employees' relationships with their organisations is primarily linked to the role the

organisation plays in determining how employees think and feel about themselves. Many important practical implications follow from this insight. First and foremost, our findings highlight the motivational power of getting employees to develop social identities that are grounded in their work organisations. This is critical, as the current results show that identity is central to employee behavior. Furthermore, the results indicate two important levers that organisations can use to encourage the development of social identity. First, organisations can operate in ways that employees regard as fair by instituting fair decision-making processes and extending fair quality of treatment. Second, they can provide identification outcomes that employees regard favorably and that encourage employees to link their social identities to their organisation (Blader & Tyler, 2009).

Further, the social exchange based nature of the antecedents of overall justice that we documented, underscores the importance of organisations investing in a mutually beneficial long-term relationship with their employees. Such an investment will assure employees control over their receipt of valued job outcomes which provides the informational input into overall justice. Second, the mediating and moderating influences we uncovered provide organisations and their managers an insight into why overall justice has its demonstrated performance implications.

Aggressive competition in today's marketplace has led organisations to strive to gain competitive advantage through further evaluation of their human capital. One strategy is to channel the creative potential of organisational incumbents. As the results of this research suggest, this can be done in one of two ways. First, through the analysis of some personality traits organisations seek in potential employees, we found direct evidence that an individual with a high sense of conscientiousness also possesses the most potential to promote positive change and therefore curbing counter productive work behaviours. Second, some researchers (e.g. Moon et al., 2008) suggest that in order to help identify separate facets to distinctive personality traits such as conscientiousness, one must narrow the conceptualisation of individual personality and therefore realize the benefits of employee taking charge behaviour.

## 7. Limitations and future research

Finally, we should acknowledge that our study has a number of limitations. By highlighting these limitations, we are simultaneously mapping out directions for future research. First, although our study is rooted in social exchange paradigm, the cross-sectional nature of this study precludes an inference about the causal status of the relationships uncovered. Consequently, we urge future research to adopt a longitudinal research design in order to establish the causal status of the antecedents and outcomes of overall justice. Secondly, with the exception of the CWB measures, data on our study variables were based on self-reports. Next, recent research has suggested a multi-focus perspective to understanding overall justice judgments specific to an organisation or a focal supervisor (Holtz & Harold, 2009). Therefore, future research should employ multi-foci perspective which will help in demonstrating the differential or common antecedents and outcomes of overall justice judgment. Also,



although out research is one of the few to look at overall justice perceptions within a non-western setting, unlike Kim and Leung (2007), we only focused on why, but not how, overall justice is related to demonstrated outcomes.

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